

latent perfectionist

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THE MANY LAYERS OF JIM DELUCIA

Jim DeLucia's studio in a converted warehouse on Anderson Street is bright and spare. On the far wall hangs a 4-by-6-foot canvas, painted in an endless field of blues and grays with a geometric layer that creates the illusion of snowfall, and a glossy, black traffic light that swings from a fragile line stretching across the landscape.

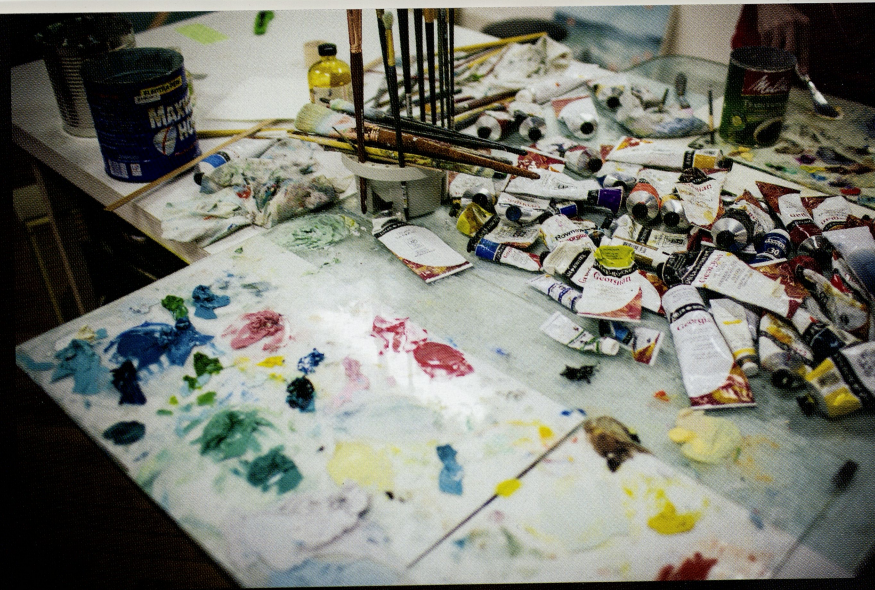
DeLucia's work is often recognized by how

he layers ordinary objects and abstract settings. On another canvas, the Venus de Milo, his trademark stenciled text, and a hint of Jim's own dog shine through the outline of a bull. On another, the pit bull mix makes an encore appearance—this time against the artist's representation of a hardwood floor. In pink.

Don't ask DeLucia to explain what it all means. He'll tell you that his inspiration comes from all over—Instagram, Facebook. Walking down the street. His dog, Gino. According to Rick Muto, co-owner of the Axom Gallery on

Anderson Avenue, DeLucia paints the story of his own experience. DeLucia had a solo exhibition at Axom last fall. Asked what caught his attention in DeLucia's work, Muto says it is "the depth of the narrative, color that is exquisite, and a strong design sense."

DeLucia is full of contradictions. He is meticulous in his work, yet he loves the drips and splattered paint. He is an admitted perfectionist, but he was not always so exacting.



Artist, Jim DeLucia

DeLucia, 34, grew up in Brockport, and loved to draw and paint but never thought he'd be a professional artist. "My teachers saw something there, but couldn't pull it out of me." Even as a senior in the bachelor of fine arts program at the College at Brockport, DeLucia says he still wasn't focused. "My professors would see glimpses of ability," but he did not always deliver on his potential, he says. "At one point, they told me I should leave the program," DeLucia remembers. That's when he got serious.

DeLucia had learned how to make things perfect working as a cabinetmaker with his father, which he did until about a year ago, when he decided to pursue art full time. "My dad was very supportive. He encouraged me," DeLucia says, even though he was leaving his father's business to devote his time to painting.

DeLucia also credits his wife, Jennifer, an art therapist and the director of wellness and supportive services at the Veteran's Outreach Center on South Avenue. They met at Brockport in their freshman year. "I chased her for four years," he says. It was a risk to quit his job, but he says: "Jenn gives me the freedom to do this." DeLucia is nervously excited to add at-home parent to his job description: The DeLucias are expecting their first child in April.

Although he just opened his studio, DeLucia's artistic career spans 11 years: "Three years seriously; one year, hardcore." When he thinks back about his attitude in college, DeLucia regrets that he didn't work harder. His art now is motivated in part by that regret. "I wish I could go back and really do it," he says. "That's why there's a lot going on in my work. It's catch-up."

—Martha Clement Rochford